

the University Musical Society for 7 years, 3 as the Chair.

Ami came to Ann Arbor after he was recruited from Harvard to direct the division of Pediatric Cardiology at the University of Michigan Medical Center. Since then he has established an international reputation for this remarkable program and created a network of 13 pediatric cardiology clinics throughout Michigan, using both his medical knowledge and his personal humor to help patients. He is now instrumentally involved in the development of the new Mott Children's hospital.

Prue and Ami have placed tremendous emphasis on the future of their community and together they helped found Save a Heart Foundation to raise funds for the Pediatric Congenital Heart Center, which has helped young people receive treatment. The Rosenthals have also provided significant funds to education programs at the Museum of Art and the Musical Society and they have a special interest in creating programs for children in Israel that encourage understanding and tolerance. Ami has also greatly impacted many young people at the collegiate level as chairman of the U-M Board of Student Publications and as a board member of the Hillel Foundation. In addition to all that the Rosenthals have done both professionally and philanthropically, they also have three sons and three grandchildren. Family is at the center of the Rosenthals' lives and they are intensely involved in their extended family as well.

I thank the Rosenthals for all that they have done for the Ann Arbor community. They serve as an example of all that individuals can do to help the greater good. This award is a tremendous accomplishment and it is certainly well deserved. For all that they have done and for the great love they have shown to Ann Arbor, I salute the Rosenthals and extend my appreciation to them for their great contributions to the people and institutions of their community.

TRIBUTE TO NILES TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 219 FINE ARTS AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Niles Township High School District 219, which is in the Ninth District of Illinois, for being named the best fine and performing arts program in the United States by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. District 219 was singled out for its outstanding arts education programs on April 17 when it was presented with the 19th annual Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network and National School Boards Association Award at the National School Boards Association annual conference in San Francisco. Since 1989, only 38 school boards in 23 States have received this prestigious award, which recognizes achievements in arts education, from the Kennedy Center.

The Niles Township High School District 219 does not take arts education for granted. District 219 recognizes that it is fortunate to be able to dedicate \$2.1 million—or 4.5 percent—

to the art programs. Students are given the opportunity to take a range of classes and instruction and even drive the arts curriculum that is offered.

With such commitment to the arts by the school, faculty, and students, the arts programs continually receive honors and awards from noteworthy organizations. For example, Niles North High School, located in District 219, has been honored three times with the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, NARAS, designation as a Grammy Signature School. District 219's theater programs have been invited twice by the American High School Theater Festival to perform at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland. And, numerous arts teachers have received "teacher of the year" honors.

Madam Speaker, I am so proud of District 219 because it understands the importance of bringing the wonders of the arts to a broader community, especially to our young adults. Niles Township High School District 219 is truly a model for arts education in Illinois and nationwide. Once again, I congratulate them on their latest achievement.

[From the Chicago Tribune, Apr. 25, 2007]

ONE FINE FINE-ARTS PROGRAM: SCHOOLS' DEDICATION PAYS OFF IN A NATIONAL AWARD FOR PROGRAMS AND IMMEASURABLE BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

(By Lisa Black)

On any given day at Skokie's two public high schools, you might find a student stretching goat skin over a hand-crafted drum, or a math class learning geometric concepts through art mosaics.

A fashion class could be designing costumes for the schools' elaborate plays and musicals, while others listen to a renowned resident artist.

At Niles North and Niles West High Schools, the diverse collection of students celebrates the arts with a passion more in keeping with the reverence for football in West Texas.

At home, more than half the students speak a language other than English—led by Korean, Urdu, Assyrian, Spanish, Tagalog and Russian—yet when it comes to the arts, they share a language.

Now, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., has singled out Niles Township High School District 219 and its school board for having the nation's best arts program, calling it "a model for arts education in Illinois and throughout the country."

The Kennedy Center presented the award, along with \$10,000, during the National School Boards Association's annual conference in San Francisco last week.

"It's an amazing accomplishment," said Lori Real, fine-arts teacher at Niles North, as her students painted on silk screens. She pointed out handcrafted African instruments, called dumbek drums, that her students also are working on.

"The arts provide that hands-on experience our students crave," Real said. "It's that hands-on experience of connecting with yourself. I think we're kind of a disconnected society now."

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is a public-private partnership that has given out the award for 19 years, basing its decision on a school district's quality and breadth of programs, student involvement and parent support, quality of teaching, and partnerships with the community.

Students filled the gymnasiums at both Skokie campuses Friday, cheering student artists, actors, musicians, dancers and their teachers.

"This is the first time I think we had a fine-arts assembly," said a delighted school board President Robert Silverman. "The kids in fine arts were on the gym floor being recognized. I think it made them feel terrific."

While athletes may rule the roost at other schools, in District 219, it's the arts students who get the most attention.

"It's nice to have a few of my jock friends come to see a production and really be blown away," said Clayton Fox, 18, of Skokie, president of the Niles North Thespian Troupe.

The arts have long been treasured in District 219, but in 2004 the school board decided to push the program to a higher level by creating a position of fine-arts director. Before that, the position combined the job of director for the English and Fine Arts Departments, officials said.

The 4,800-student district pulls from a robust tax base in Skokie, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove and Niles and devotes \$2.1 million—or about 4.5 percent of its annual instructional budget—to the arts. That's about \$442 per student, according to district figures. That compares to arts spending of 2 to 3 percent of school budgets statewide, according to a 2005 survey of school administrators.

In 2006 District 219 spent \$17,422 per pupil in operating expenses, ranking it third among all districts in statewide. High school districts spent an average \$12,365 per pupil, according to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Within the past two years the District 219 equipped both schools with \$250,000 fine-arts resource laboratories, each with 25 computers, keyboards, a teacher workstation and specialized art and music software. Before that, the district completed black box theaters at each school. They are small, unadorned rooms with dark floors and curtained walls that provide an intimate and versatile performing space.

Some District 219 teachers and students said they felt a bit guilty about the award, because it reminds them of the disparities between their school and the less affluent. Real, who taught in the Chicago Public Schools for 12 years, said District 219 participates in student exchange programs with inner-city schools.

The Kennedy Center judges noted that the depth of courses allows students to take art classes during all four years of high school and that many programs are student-driven, said Barbara Shepherd, director of the center's national partnerships division.

On a recent afternoon at Niles North, students in jeans and flip-flops plunked down on band room chairs, lifted their stringed instruments and dove into a Brahms piece. Their no-nonsense orchestra director, Pam Hendrix, grabbed a late slip from a new arrival without missing a stroke of her baton.

The district has just added guitar lessons and digital piano to its music program, "filling a niche for students who don't fit into traditional band and choir," Hendrix said later. "The kids want to jam."

In the same classroom wing, Tim Ortmann led a drama class for students with physical and mental disabilities in the black box theater.

Ortmann, the school's theater director, led his students through sweeping motions and vocal exercises, prompting giggles when he asked students to say, then sing the phrase, "Open-Pit barbecue sauce."

"Do I have to come and push your tummy?" he joked when one student's song came out high-pitched and breathless.

Niles North and Niles West students present about eight musicals and plays at each campus per year, designing their own

costumes and sets. The theater program has twice been invited by the American High School Theatre Festival to perform at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Students said they are thrilled, but not surprised, that their district won the Kennedy Center award.

Sari Weintraub, 17, a junior at Niles West who plays oboe, described her school's concerts as a multimedia affair, complete with audiovisual presentations and musicians who move around the auditorium for a "surround sound" effect.

"He likes to incorporate everything," she said of her band director.

"It keeps people from getting bored."

Fox was one of three students chosen as a member of the Niles North "director's circle" this year.

After being selected through an extensive audition, the circle members produce and perform the first play the following school year. In return, they serve the theater department, completing tasks and mentoring other students, throughout the rest of the year. "He will push you as far as you can possibly go," Fox said. "He wants you to be the best. And once you get there, no one will give you more respect than he will. It's tough love. He wants to see us succeed."

TRIBUTE TO RABBI JONATHAN JAFFE BERNHARD

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend Rabbi Jonathan Jaffe Bernhard in recognition of his installation as Senior Rabbi of Adat Ari El. As a long-time member of the synagogue, I know firsthand of his excellent work and outstanding accomplishments, and have been the beneficiary of his ability to offer solace and comfort at difficult times.

Jonathan Bernhard was born in Great Neck, Long Island, NY. From age seven to fourteen, he lived with his parents in London and then they returned to make their home in Manhattan. His interest in Judaism was sparked by reading Elie Wiesel's book, "Night." While attending Haverford College, he majored in religious studies and he also worked on a Kibbutz. After receiving his BA in 1988, he traveled to Los Angeles to attend Brandeis-Bardein Summer Institute and then continued extensive studies at Yeshiva (Yeshivat Hamivtar) in Efrat on the West Bank.

Jonathan's experiences in Israel inspired him to become an observant Jew. He wanted to become a professor of religion when he moved back to the United States. While living in Boston, he rekindled his friendship with Laurie Jaffe who encouraged him to pursue the rabbinate. They met at Brandeis-Bardein Institute in California in 1988.

Upon completing his studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Rabbi Bernhard was ordained in 1996 and took a position at Adat Ari El. Adat Ari El is in the heart of my congressional district and was the first conservative synagogue in the San Fernando Valley. Rabbi Bernhard is at the spiritual center of the Congregation and deserves commendation for his dedication to Jewish principles, education and culture. He continues to create and maintain a wonderful sense of Jewish community by help-

ing provide an Early Childhood Center, Day School, Religious Schools, Adult Education and Sisterhood programs as well as Holiday services, daily Minyan services and the life cycle services (weddings, funerals, baby namings, bar/bat mitzvahs, unveilings.)

Jonathan and Laurie married in 1992 and they are proud parents of three sons, Nathaniel, Micah and Elijah.

I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting and honoring Rabbi Bernhard for his invaluable role at Adat Ari El and within the Jewish community, and wishing him our fervent hope for continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICHARD BERNSTEIN, THE JEWISH COM- MUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL'S 2007 ACTIVIST OF THE YEAR

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I want to recognize the accomplishments of Richard Bernstein and congratulate him as he receives the Jewish Community Relations Council's Activist of the Year Award for 2007. His unparalleled dedication to upholding and defending the rights of the disabled is a priceless commodity to the citizens of the State of Michigan.

Mr. Bernstein has been an inspiration to many throughout his career. Blind since birth, he is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Northwestern University Law School and currently serves as an attorney with the Law Offices of Sam Bernstein in Farmington Hills. His tireless work ethic and advocacy for disabled rights and the public interest has ensured that the disabled have an equal footing with the entire community. His penchant for running marathons epitomizes his work ethic; he does not shy away from daunting tasks and knows how to finish them.

I am proud to have been able to work with Mr. Bernstein to help blind and dyslexic students to access textbooks and keep up with students that can read the printed word. After securing federal funding, Mr. Bernstein and I were able to work together with the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic—Michigan Unit to provide blind and dyslexic students access to audio texts so that they can learn and succeed in school, providing them with the knowledge and skills to find jobs after graduation. This important work underscores Mr. Bernstein's commitment to helping the disabled achieve an equal footing in our society.

Madam Speaker, Richard Bernstein has been and will continue to be a pillar for our community. I congratulate him upon receiving this well-deserved award and look forward to working with him in the future as he continues to devote his work to bettering the lives of so many.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA OF ARMY SPECIALIST JOHN D. FLORES OF GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in remembrance and recognition of United States Army Specialist John D. Flores of Barrigada, Guam. Specialist Flores died on May 3, 2007, as a result to injuries sustained when his unit came under attack in Baghdad, Iraq. SPC Flores was 21 years old. He is the tenth son of Guam to make the ultimate sacrifice for his country in the ongoing war on terror. The loss of an outstanding soldier like Specialist Flores is grave for the entire Nation. But the pain of John's passing is most severely felt by Guam and its people—his beloved home and neighbors.

SPC John Flores was a fine soldier who, like many before him from Guam, served the United States and our community with selfless dedication. He answered our country's call to duty and he made the ultimate sacrifice in our defense.

John was not only a dedicated soldier, but also a kind and generous person, a devoted husband, and a loving father. He had been married to his wife Charlene for just over a year. They graduated together from George Washington High School in 2004. John was immensely proud of, and loved dearly, his daughter, Chloe. His family will always remember him being a young man who celebrated life to its fullest and one who possessed maturity beyond his years. His love for his family, his devotion to his island, and his dedication to his country and flag will always serve as an outstanding role model for and inspiration to his family, friends, and future generations of Guam soldiers.

I was deeply saddened to learn of Specialist Flores's passing, as I have been for all of the servicemembers from our island and communities across the United States who have given their lives in service to our country. I join the people of Guam and all Americans in offering my most sincere condolences and heartfelt prayers to SPC John Flores' family, friends, and fellow soldiers during this difficult time. In particular, on behalf of a grateful country, I extend my deepest sympathies to John's wife, Charlene, and his daughter, Chloe. Our country and our island owe Specialist Flores and his loved ones an unpayable debt of gratitude for the sacrifice they have made on our behalf.

John was an admirable son of Guam, a proud American soldier. He proved that he was willing and prepared to defend his country and his home island, no matter what the price. He lost his life in the noble effort to rebuild a nation in freedom so that others might some day know the joys of liberty and justice. And for that sacrifice, we are eternally grateful. God Bless John Flores, and God Bless our great country, the United States of America.